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Date: (Date of Board Meeting)

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION   x  

Board Agenda: Yes   x  

No \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee  
Megan Tempel-Milner, Ph.D. TAG Coordinator

**THROUGH:** Terri H. Mozingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership  
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Meagan Alderton, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** 2020-2021 Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee Annual Report

**ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

**SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:**

Focus Area 3: Strategic Plan Implementation

Focus Area 5: Academic Disparities

**SUMMARY:**

The Talented and Gifted Advisory committee (TAGAC) is focused on assuring that the needs of all Talented and Gifted students are met in the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). The Scope of Work for the 2020-2021 school year was to improve the ways that the academic and social-emotional needs of Talented and Gifted (TAG) students in ACPS are met by focusing its efforts on key objectives, including:

- Tracking the impacts of virtual learning on TAG and Young Scholar students by monitoring the academic and social-emotional services they receive.

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- Addressing equity issues within the TAG program by monitoring students' identification and delivery of services for the Young Scholars Program, GIA and Subject-Specific; examining testing practices; advocating for consistency in programming across schools; and understanding additional barriers including language, disability, and social relationships.
- Creating a comprehensive K-12 Roadmap for gifted services, including the following: ensuring multiple entry points to the program; improving transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school; monitoring the academic rigor provided via differentiation and honors classes; improving the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) and improved training, curriculum extensions, and supports for teachers and staff supporting TAG students.

Accompanying each of these key objectives were the following set of Action Items:

- Report back to the School Board on gifted students' experiences and needs during virtual learning based on feedback from committee members and parents, while also seeking out positive virtual learning experiences that can benefit ALL students.
- Monitor the Young Scholars Program, review the Annual Indicators Report and research testing with awareness of social, cultural and economic barriers.
- Rethink service approaches to better deliver differentiation and make recommendations to the TAG Local Plan.
- Assign subcommittees as required to efficiently execute the above action items.

### **BACKGROUND:**

This represents a high-level overview of our activities from 14 full committee meetings and numerous, separate subcommittee meetings during the 2020-2021 School Year. Per the ACPS subcommittee operating guidelines the TAGAC has approved minutes for all of our meetings in the ACPS archives.

We held a special July meeting to discuss the Spring's Virtual Learning experience and offer suggestions for meeting the needs of gifted students and amending the identification process for the upcoming school year; given the expectation that students would not be in classrooms for some portion of the year.

In September, the committee remained focused on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic with concerns about the inability to provide universal testing to first and third graders. The Scope of Work was also drafted.

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October's meeting included invaluable feedback from our student representative about some experiences of non-white students in the TAG program, which served to only reinforce the committee's commitment to meet the needs of all gifted students. Additionally, the committee was briefed on the new Portfolio Process as a mechanism for identification of first and third grade students for TAG programming in lieu of universal testing which would be unavailable.

In November, we welcomed Ms. Dornswalo Wilkins-McCorey, a Gifted Coordinator with the Virginia Beach Public Schools and President-Elect of the Virginia Association of Gifted Children. She shared her experience launching a book study program *A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children* certified by the Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) to help parents understand and support their children, as well as develop a richly supporting community of parents of gifted learners. It was piloted at 17 Title 1 schools and was extremely successful. The committee's takeaway was that parent support groups can be helpful for ALL parents. Additionally, the Chair gave a presentation on TAGAC to the PTAC Diversity and Inclusion Committee (see attached *TAG PTAC Presentation*) and found there are several opportunities to partner on shared initiatives.

The committee hosted two guest speakers in December: Dr. Jonathan Plucker, President of the National Association for Gifted Children and Angela Greene from the ACPS Accountability Office. Both speakers were knowledgeable, compelling and contributed greatly to the committee's work on equity and testing. Expanded detail is provided in the *TAGAC Identification and Testing Subcommittee Report*.

In January, acting TAG Coordinator, Tiana Dominick, provided updates on the final roll-out of the Young Scholars program to all elementary schools and fielded additional questions regarding the program. Committee members began discussions about subcommittees aligned to the Scope of Work objectives and drafting corresponding reports.

February's meeting focused on a discussion with Ms. Krishna Levya, ACPS Director of Family and Community Engagement (FACE), about opportunities to leverage FACE to reach underserved communities and inform them about the TAG program. For additional detail see *TAGAC K12 Communications Subcommittee Report*. The committee also formalized subcommittees by focus area to expedite drafting and submitting reports based on action items from the 2020-2021 Scope of Work.

In order to follow School Board rules and manage the constraints of virtual meetings, the March meeting was a series of rolling subcommittee meetings where a designated leader could

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organize with fellow members and plan for separate, public subcommittee meetings to draft their reports. These subcommittees continued to meet throughout March and April.

With great enthusiasm, the committee welcomed Dr. Megan Temple-Milner as the new Director of Gifted and Advanced Academic Programs at the start of our April meeting. We also reviewed the Annual *Indicators Report November 2020* and discussed at length the Virginia Mathematics Pathway Initiative and how it might affect TAG programs if implemented by the state.

During our May meeting, the committee discussed the draft reports of the subcommittees and elected next year's officers.

In June we learned that the Portfolio Process had been halted and a new approach was being implemented immediately to make sure all students in current first and third grade would have equal access to assessment for TAG services. The committee applauded Ms. Temple-Milner's efforts with regard to this change.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the TAGAC Annual Report including all Attachments.

**IMPACT:**

By adopting the recommendations contained in these reports TAGAC believes ACPS will provide a stronger, better supported and more equitable talented and gifted program to its students.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

TAGAC K12 Communications Subcommittee Report  
TAGAC Student Voices Subcommittee Report  
TAGAC Identification and Testing Subcommittee Report  
TAGAC Virtual Learning Subcommittee Report  
TAG PTAC Presentation  
Talented and Gifted Program Indicators November 2020

**CONTACT:**

Laura Rose, Chair, Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee, [roselauraw@yahoo.com](mailto:roselauraw@yahoo.com)  
Dr. Megan Tempel-Milner, [megan.tempel-milner@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:megan.tempel-milner@acps.k12.va.us)